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ABSTRACT

In the fall of 1972, superintendents and principals in 21 school district with significant Puerto Rican enrollment were interviewed. The interviews (usually lasting over three hours) focused on the educators' attitudes toward Puerto Ricans as a people; their perceptions of the educational needs of Puerto Rican youngsters; views on accountability, assimilation versus cultural pluralism, bilingual/bicultural education, and parental involvement. Among the findings were the following: While 30 percent of the educators indicate it is methodologically unsound to evaluate the educational development of children with a language barrier (primary language of communication being different from the language of instruction) in the same manner as for children who speak and understand English fluently, all 21 districts do so. Only 13 percent of the educators indicated that they were trying to correct this procedure, despite limited resources, by using bilingual test monitors and reportedly intensive Spanish-speaking personnel recruitment. Seventy percent of the administrators stated that they agreed with accountability, but only if it were shared equally by parent, student, teacher, principal, superintendent, board, funding source, and 10 percent even included in the school custodian. (Author/JM)

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THE PUERTO RICAN EXPERIENCE:
AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH STUDY

Chapter II: The Educators

partial fulfillment of U.S.
Office of Education Research
grant no. OEG-0-72-1110

initial statement on "thorough
and efficient education

Rev. Alfonso Roman
Chairman

Hector S. Rodriguez
Executive Director

John W. Gotsch
Research Director

Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey
222 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08608

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The attached chapter on "The Educators" is the first stage in the fulfillment of the above research grant. Ten thousand questionnaires administered to elementary and secondary Puerto Rican and Hispanic students and their parents throughout New Jersey provides additional data for subsequent chapters currently being completed.

To Dr. John Rickert, Chairman of Stockton College's Division of Management Sciences, and Professor Alfonso Gandica we acknowledge gratefully their support in the data processing of the students and parents questionnaires. Rickert and Gandica provided wise counsel and yeoman service.

To the students and their parents who cooperated and made such a factual statement possible, we can only hope that our tasks of data-gathering, processing, and analysis are as full and complete as is your interest and support.

To the principals and superintendents (the educators), we respect your candor and are thankful for your cooperation.

To the board and staff who contributed to this important document and the additional forthcoming chapters, I can only add that our collective patience and resolve has, indeed, been sustained and rewarded.

Rev. Alfonso Roman
Chairman

Chapter II: The Educators

The New Jersey Supreme Court in its decision of April 3, 1973, in the case of Robinson V. Cahill declared the state's system of school finance unconstitutional in that it fails to provide a "thorough and efficient" system of public schools as mandated by the State Constitution.

The court recognized both the financial and the "content" aspects of the constitutional requirement. However, the weight of public attention has been on the former: "It may be doubted that the thorough and efficient system of schools required by the 1875 amendment can realistically be met by reliance upon local taxation."... "There is no more evidence today than there was a hundred years ago that this approach will succeed."

While the court stopped short of specifying whether the "content" portion of the definition would entail both process and product, it is clear that many educators feel it is their responsibility and prerogative as educators to do so.

No one can quarrel with the question: "Can a system be thorough and efficient if it does not provide a process which yields a product?" The crucial questions, of course are <u>who</u> develops the process (i.e., goals, objectives, assessment, program activities, and evaluation); and <u>who and how</u> is the product monitored and all that that entails.

The problem is that no one knows what *is* "thorough and efficient" education. While the court has stated that "quality educational opportunity does depend in substantial measure upon the numbers of dollars invested," it is quite clear that most working definitions proceed backwards from the premise of what "thorough and efficient" *is not*.

It may be worthwhile to note at this juncture that Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines *thorough* as "complete" or "exhaustive," and *efficient* as "productive" in terms of both "desired effects" and "without waste" with "effective" being its synonym.

Now, to join the issue, it unavoidably must be said that far too many New Jersey educational administrators by acquiescence and/or lack of resolve, have allowed educational policies to be diluted and subverted by real and perceived local "political" constraints (i.e. The "movers and the shakers," the "board," the "favoritism of tenure," "lack of parental involvement," teacher provincialism and the "traditional" fare of their education). The hard reality is that the education system, as a socio-political process, has stifled too many educational administrators. The development and monitoring of the "content" (process and product) of "thorough and efficient" education must recognize this fact. The fiscal apprehensions that the court expressed concerning the "convulsive implications" for "home rule" are no less true for the area of educational "content".

In the fall of 1972, superintendents and principals in twenty one (21) school districts with significant[1] Puerto Rican enrollment were interviewed (West New York, Union City, Hoboken, Perth Amboy, Woodbine, Passaic, Weehawken, Paterson, Elizabeth, Vineland, Dover, Jersey City, Newark, Camden, New Brunswick, Lakewood, Hammonton, Long Branch, North Bergen, Trenton, and Keyport).

Our interviews (usually lasting over three hours) were focused on the educators' attitudes towards Puerto Ricans as a people; their perceptions of the educational needs of Puerto Rican youngsters; views on accountability, assimilation vs cultura pluralism, bilingual/bicultural education, and parental involvement.

The implications of our one hundred hour plus conversation with New Jersey's educational administrators goes far beyond the Puerto Rican communities - it reaches and conceivably effects every child in this state.

This is not to say that outstanding educators are not quietly maximizing the educational experience of youngsters who are in their charge. They are there and they are recognized locally. It is not the purpose of either the research we conducted or this report to make qualitative and/or quantitative

1. Diego Castellanos, The Hispanic Experience in New Jersey Schools, New Jersey Department of Education, p. 17.

distinctions between administrators and/or districts.

Summary of Findings:

An over-all view of the educators' responses to our interview schedule (see appendix) indicates a highly patterned, though not mutually exclusive, typology:

TABLE II-1

Types of Educational Administrators

Characteristics	Sensitive	Dogmatic	Fencesitting
Assessment of Spanish vs English speaking students.	Same, unfortunately... system must be changed.	Same, of course. Why should they be any different.	Stresses neither.
Assessment of School	Determined by advancement of student.	Board of Education assesses.	Board's responsibility.
Parents view of school	Favorable. Quite pleased.	Unfavorable	Don't know
Accountability	We are responsible.	Not us	Depends on the conditions.
Assimilation	Against	Favor-one nation	evasive- maybe both.
Cultural Pluralism	Favor strongly	Against	maybe both-evasive
Bilingual Education	Support	Opposed	What is it?

Characteristics	[illegible]	[illegible]matic	Fencesitting
Bilingual Education Equal/compensatory	Equal	Compensatory if at all	Combination
Speaking Spanish in school	Why not...as long as they communicate.	Not in school	Don't care either way.
Bilingual Education income groups.	Favorably for all.	Opposed	What does money have to do with it?
Puerto Rican personnel	Need more-lip-service.	We interview people...not nationalities.	It's not up to us...up to Board of Education.
Cooperation with interviewer	Most cooperative...hypocritical at times.	Straight facts... no promises	Doesn't want to incriminate himself.
General feeling towards Spanish students.	Open to suggestions trying to help.	"swim or sink" attitude.	Indifferent
Parents participation in school decision-making.	Yes - most necessary	Out of the question.	To a certain extent only.

Findings:

While 30% of the educators indicate it is methodologically unsound to evaluate the educational development of children with a language barrier (primary language of communication being different from the language of instruction) in the same manner as for children who speak and understand English fluently, all twenty-one districts do so inspite of the recognized conse-

quences. Only 13% of the educators indicated that they were trying to correct this procedure, despite limited resources, by using bi-lingual test monitors and reportedly intensive Spanish-speaking personnel recruitment. The fact remains that in most of the twenty one school districts the administrative policy and procedures for Spanish-speaking pupils and students can only be described as "sink or swim."

There is an urgent need for the schools to involve the local Hispanic community more fully and actively, a view which is not at all shared by the majority of the educators interviewed. Sixty six per cent of the educators claim that Puerto Rican parents view their children's schooling favorably a perception unwarranted by the responses gathered from the parent's questionnaire (see chapter on Parents).

That educators are so out of touch with community sentiments about local educational institutions is not surprising when you consider that the prevailing attitude among administrators is that 'if they (parents and community) don't agree they must agree.' However, there was an under-current in most of the interviews where many of the educators seemed to be saying: 'We know we have problems, but if we went looking for them - then there would be no way of effectively avoiding them.'

What administrators perceive themselves in the hot seat is perhaps best seen in the responses we received concerning accountability. Seventy per cent stated that they agreed with accountability, but only if it was shared equally by parent,

student, teacher, principal, superintendent, board, funding source, and 10% even included the school custodian.

It is a troubling commentary to note that most educators, while not discouraging parental involvement do try to minimize it, are very anxious to have parents share equally in any procedure which would encompass responsibility and accountability for assuring definite levels of pupil attainment.

The argument for parents sharing in the responsibility for their children's educational achievement would perhaps be more cogent and reasonable if: 1) Parents were to become an integral part of the system and process; 2) Our culturally pluralistic society would be recognized as such and not be twisted out of shape by insidious ethnocentrism.

Fifty per cent of the educators, the 'dogmatists', clearly espoused an assimilationist outlook. Their answers left little doubt about their values and the intensity of them:

- We are one main group, Americans-an American nation";

-"If we emphasize one culture, we have to be careful not to stifle another - who can control this";

-"There are too many cultures to deal with each one individually - it is easier to treat them all as the American culture";

-"You came to this country, you adapt to us";

-"We are americanizing you for your benefit. It is necessary to assimilate in order to live and function in this country";

-"American society is ultimate (don't Puerto Ricans want to advance?)."

The "fence-sitting" educators while advocating assimilation stated:

-"While other cultures should not be stifled, they should also not be encouraged";

-"Individual cultural heritage should be maintained at home at least nominally so that children not have identity (psychological) problems";

-"Cultural pluralism should be acknowledged to a certain extent, but not in the schools as that could be used as an excuse when a student is doing poorly".

Those educators who were verbally "sensitive" to cultural diversity and viewed cultural pluralism as a necessary educational vehicle were not uniform in their beliefs:

-"It is important not to lose one's identity";

-"Assimilation comes naturally in the long run, whether one wants it or not, so we don't have to work at it";

-"One's culture and heritage might be lost or neutralized if it is not continually reinforced and enhanced";

"Schools should not be allowed to americanize (sic) foreign peoples at the expense of eliminating their language and cultural orientation";

-"Citizenship indoctrination should not be forced on anyone".

-A number of educators even went so far as to say it may make more sense to change the school's language rather than the child's".

It is our view that the previously stated belief for Spanish exclusivity if implemented would be just as disastrous in its consequences as is the current English mono-lingual approach. A culturally pluralistic society (New Jersey-Puerto Rico) must equip her children thoroughly and efficiently" to function in the languages and cultural milieux which can reasonably be projected. The "purpose" (process and product) and importance of education was stated in the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision. The Supreme Court found education to be:

a) The most important function of state and local government;

b) Required for performance of basic public responsibilities;

c) Required for service in armed forces;

d) The foundation of good citizenship;

e) The principal instrument in awakening a child to cultural values;

f) The principal instrument in preparing for later professional training, etc.

While schools are an important instrument for national integration (especially in a pluralistic society), education like other mechanisms of modernization may also be widening the gaps between certain sectors of society rather than narrowing them

The disparities of advantage or asymmetrical educational development is but one impediment to the achievement of a common core of values and institutions upon which the legitimacy of any society must perforce rest.

Anthropology, unlike sociology, has given strong support for the mutuality of exchange between various segments of a pluralistic society. Unfortunately, the policy implications of acculturation (anthropology) vis-á-vis assimilation (sociology) especially in the field of education are incomplete and unclear due to the dominance of the latter conceptualization. For a variety of reasons, we have made less use in recent years of the ethnic community as an instrument of acculturation. Because of language differences and the distinctive cultural background of the Puerto Rican, the failure to develop efficient ethnic instruments to aid in acculturation has worked to the detriment of the Puerto Rican and New Jersey Hispanic.

The role of education in the process of modernization and national integration in our culturally pluralistic society could become positive if acculturation were given a chance. As anthropologist Clifford Geertz put it: "The integrative revolution does not do away with enthnocentrism, it merely modernizes it."

One of the instruments for acculturation is bilingual education. Only fifty (50) per cent of the educators interviewed

supported the concept of bilingual education in general with various provisos:

-If the transition from Spanish to English is done gradually;

-If bilingual education is equal, not compensatory education;

-If emphasis is given to English;

-If English-speaking children do not suffer any consequences.

Too often assimilationist values dominated questions about bilingual education:

-"English is our common language. If anyone wants to learn another language they can wait until they get to college";

-"If a child clings to Spanish he will have more difficulty in making a transition to English";

-"It is difficult for a child to switch back and forth from English to Spanish";

-"Other students who are not Spanish-speaking will suffer, and they are our main priority since our national language is English";

-"It tends to separate students into racial groups";

-"The process is too long. Besides, our society is not bilingual";

-"It is a privilege to live in the United States where the right to learn another language might be considered";

-"Puerto Ricans should be grateful if bilingual education is provided at our expense and time. Millions of others have learned English by means of our regular school system".

The most encouraging response we did receive from the educators was that if bilingual education were to be implemented locally, the overwhelming response was for all income groups participating and for Spanish-speaking students to be mixed with English-speaking students.

Clearly, the underlying motivation for this is assimilation and not the mutuality of exchange it would afford both English and Spanish-speaking youngsters. This pressure for assimilation cannot be underscored enough for over half of the school districts researched acknowledged that Puerto Rican and Hispanic students were "actively discouraged" from speaking Spanish amongst themselves.

Again:

- "They should become part of the whole student body";
- "They can always speak Spanish in their homes ;
- "In school they should speak English";

It is a striking contradiction that we spend millions of dollars to encourage students to learn a foreign language. Yet scant part of local school budgets go to maintain and further develop the native language competence already existing in children who speak these same languages as a result of their own family background. On the contrary, schools go to all sorts of expenses to eradicate the child's language and substitute the school's before we begin to teach him.

A child who is going through "citizenship" indoctrination and who is told to "speak English, be American" at school, and then goes home only to be told "don't speak English around here, you're Puerto Rican", can be caught in a serious dilemma and may even become a cultural schizophrenic in an effort to please both home and school.

It is unconscionable that Puerto Rican and Hispanic pupils are placed in "special education" (i.e. "mentally retarded," "culturally deprived") classes based on tests which measure English language skills. That a state-wide uniform procedure has yet to be developed and implemented which is culturally and linguistically neutral (read, not biased) for placement and needs evaluation is catastrophic. To say that Spanish-speaking youngsters are evaluated by Spanish-speaking teachers and/or counselors is administrative shorthand for educational nonfeasance. The issue is direct and irrefutable. The consequences for far too many Puerto Ricans and Hispanics in New Jersey are no different than if the local and state educational hierarchy had deliberately set-up a conscious policy of 'push-out' Spanish-speaking youngsters. It is important to note that many parents believe this to be the case. When Puerto Ricans are dropping out of school at a rate <u>four times</u> that of Anglo-whites and <u>twice</u> that of Black people, it is exceedingly difficult to argue against such a view. Especially, when so many educators openly espouse what can only be viewed as insidious ethnocentrism.

Testing, certainly current procedures, must be recognized as a serious educational road block for Spanish-speaking students. The failure of existing instruments to validly measure Spanish-speaking children's capabilities is the principal reason for their inordinate relegation to the lower educational tracks. Puerto Rican children still tend to complete the phrase "Bread and_____" with coffee instead of butter. And they are still not sure whether "it is raining" or "it is sunny" when they see a drawing of a person carrying an umbrella. It is incomprehensible that half a century after we have put the infamous "Alpha and Beta" tests behind us, there is still the need to say: Tests designed to measure English comprehension and middle class cultural values cannot measure cognitive growth, communication skills, and social and emotional adjustment of non-English speaking children who come from, all too often, underpriviledged families.

In our search to find out how educators measured the learning development of Spanish-speaking children we asked about local testing procedures. Forty seven per cent indicated that the Spanish-speaking students were administered the same measuring instrument that was used for non-Spanish-speaking students. The majority of these who did so admitted that such a procedure was not an accurate method of evaluating the learning development of Puerto Rican students. Some even confessed that they took the results with a "grain of salt" because of their lack of validity. The latter group indicated that they "graded the results very

carefully, taking into consideration the lack of knowledge of the English language of each child. (An aside to professors of testing and measurement at graduate schools of education: What happened to Whitehead, let alone Cronbach, Guilford, Thorndike et alia?).

Thirty per cent of the educators indicated that they used a Spanish test for their Spanish-speaking students. Seven per cent avoided testing their Spanish-speaking students and ten per cent left the measuring up to "Spanish-speaking teachers or counselors." Six per cent gave no definitive answer.

As to the issue of whether existing testing procedures are culturally biased, twenty seven per cent of the educators indicated that this is a "myth and is used as a means for justifying poor grades." However, sixty per cent did acknowledge that present testing procedure is "faulty at best." If education in New Jersey is to be "thorough and efficient" the overwhelming majority of the educators we interviewed would welcome a state-wide overhaul (for some) or scrapping (for others of the existing testing and measurement procedures.

Many educators verbalize parental participation in the educational process but only up to a certain point: curriculum development and policy making is only for the "professionals". Parents are strongly urged to become involved in their children's educational process by helping them at home with their homework, providing learning experiences such as "field trips", traveling, books, dictionaries and even manners and obedience training.

Parents are urged to visit the school, join the P.T.A., attend dinners, discuss their child's progress or lack of it with the teacher, and so on.

Thirty three per cent said absolutely no parental involvement in the "professional arena". Sixty three per cent conceded that parents could (not should) be involved "to a certain extent" in curricula development and maybe even "low-level" decision-making.

Without dissent, all the educators expressed concern about parental "lack of interest and involvement" in the educational process of their children. It is important to note a subtle yet crucial distinction as to why educators and parents have such dichotomous views about the latter's "participation".

Even when school systems make vigorous attempts of communicating to Spanish-speaking parents (bi-lingual flyers, bi-lingual meetings, bi-lingual counselors, etcetera), the fact remains that even these "sensitive" systems are engaged in at best a one-way flow of information. The real question for all local public education systems in our state and country is: Participation by whose terms and definitions; participation where and when; participation at whose initiation?

If "parental involvement" is to be viewed by educators as problematical, then it must clearly be viewed as a universal problem and not one confined solely to New Jersey's Spanish-speaking citizens. The fact is that it is the rare school system that does not take an adversary posture vis-á-vis parents, the

cloaked trappings to the contrary.

Educators must recognize the psycho-political implications of meetings held in school buildings, convened by educators, controlled by educators, chaired by educators, with parents being recognized and participating at the signal of educators, the format of the program determined by educators, and the meeting adjourned by educators. If "participation" is at issue, then all segments of community life must respect the root and branch of this much-abused concept.

It was difficult to determine, from our interviews with the superintendents and principals, precisely what educational tracki systems are used in New Jersey and how safe-guards are built-in to preclude permanent track or educational dead-ends for Spanish-speaking youngsters.

Twenty seven per cent of the educators stated that they do not employ tracking systems for Spanish-speaking students. They contend that they lean heavily on the judgements and recommendations of counselors and/or available bilingual teachers for placement and advancement considerations rather than the more formaliz systematic and rationalized procedures.

Forty per cent of the educators indicated that their operati al tracking system was used for both English as well as for Spanish-speaking students, however, they contend that it is used "with much more caution" for the latter group. They argue:

a) Each child's track is subject to change primarily determi ed by performance and record. "No chance for educational deadend

b) Spanish-speaking students are being constantly evaluated and track changed accordingly.

c) Tracking system is very flexible.

At least two districts were reported as utilizing for Spanish-speaking students the same tracking system developed for English-speaking youngsters. In these two districts it was also noted that an individual student's track would not change until that student's knowledge of the English language, irregardless of background or primary language of communication, changes or unless the student showed signs of what these educators' characterized as "aspiration or motivation".

Finally, twenty seven percent of educators either contended that they did not know what a tracking system is or did not answer the question about tracking system and safeguards for Spanish-speaking students.

Forty six percent of the educators shared the view that the techniques used for English as a Second Language (ESL) should be different than those used in teaching English as a native language. However, most of the educators did not know what those techniques should be and how they should be defined. Thirty percent of the educators believed that ESL techniques were no different from existing English language techniques, though they recognized the "possibility for modifications if the need arises". The remaining twenty four percent either indicated that ESL techniques should be left to the experts in linguistics or pleaded ignorance.

What would educators do if they "had the necessary resources, what components would (they) develop to insure equality of education opportunities for (their) students ? Twenty percent of the educators took exception to the question for they felt it implicit viewed the status quo as unequal. These educators stated that their systems already had equal education opportunities for all their students. Additional resources would be welcomed however, but not for a drastic overhaul of the educational delivery system.

The overwhelming response to this question was twofold: 1) "more individualized instruction," and 2) "additional physical facilities." Only after these generalized areas were gotten out of the way did the educators get more specific:

a) reading programs staffed by specialists;

b) more counselors and social workers;

c) more field trips;

d) hardware (closed circuit television);

e) curriculum specialization;

f) more personnel - bilingual staff;

g) programs for improving parent/school relationship;

h) qualified teachers;

i) extension of tutorial programs;

j) nursery education;

k) vocational training

Ten percent of the educators frankly stated that they did not know what to do to "insure equality of education opportunities even if the necessary resources" were available.

The one question in the administered interview schedule which was not attitudinal in nature drew the most open hostility by the educators. To the question, "How many Puerto Ricans work in your school": sixty percent had "some"; twenty percent had "some" Spanish-speaking employees but not sure if Puerto Rican; thirteen percent did not answer; and seven percent said they did not keep track of their employees' nationalities. The range of Puerto Rican personnel in those districts with "some" was difficult to determine but it appears that it is from twenty to one with the skew decidely to the lower number.

The fact that we did not receive the hard data which we were seeking is perhaps compensated for by the rationalizations most of the educators apparently felt was necessary to explain their amorphous answers. Fifty three percent of them made it very clear that it was their board's and not their responsibility to recruit bilingual staff. They "recommend, whatever it's worth, the board hires." Thirteen percent stated that it was difficult to find 'qualified' Puerto Rican teachers and if they were available they "usually have a heavy accent.' These educators emphasized that bilingual recruitment of school personnel is a two-way street and that the Puerto Rican communities should supply more 'qualified teachers." Twenty seven percent said that they did not recruit nationalities but rather "qualified teachers."

The final question we put to our interviewees in the interview schedule was whether they would "support a locally funded bilingual bicultural program with significant community input at all levels? Will you go to your board and make such a recommendation?"

Seventy three percent seemed to respond favorably, however there were so many provisos we are not sure what they seemed to be saying. The others continued to be open in their fence-sitting

In addition to the interview schedules we administered to the superintendents and principals in the twenty one schools, we also sent questionnaires (see appendix) to the superintendents requesting hard data as supplemental to the attitudinal responses Fourteen or forty seven percent of the research districts complie Of those who did so, the responses were often fragmentary, incomplete, and in some instances it is clear that questions were not fully understood.

Unfortunately, the less than enthusiastic response to our questionnaire raises more questions than the partial data permits us to answer.

For example, only five districts gave us an ethnic breakdown of their students reading at their grade level." These five districts represent only thirty six percent of the complying districts and only twenty four percent of the total twenty one research districts.

Hence, in no way can we methodologically contend that these partial findings are in anyway representative of the larger research population. However, the serious questions that the existing data do raise and the low level of cooperation evidenced by the superintendents does portend for immediate documentation to insure that these partial findings are not, indeed, representative.

Table II-2

Ethnic Breakdown of Pupil's Reading BELOW Grade Level

1. Community A

Grade	%Puerto Ricans
1	72
2	71
3	86
4	82
5	82
6	80

2. Community B

Grade	%Puerto Ricans	%Black	%Anglo
1	53	43	6
2	60	27	17
3	88	68	52
4	53	27	21
5	91	95	62
6	91	68	64

3. Community C

Grade	%Puerto Ricans	%Blacks	%Anglo
4	50	66	57
5	50	77	26
6	33	15	23
7	100	63	21
8	37	33	39

4. Community D

Grade	%Puerto Ricans	%Blacks	%Anglo
2	67	59	17
3	54	47	44
4	53	70	57
5	94	80	29
6	94	80	86
7	56	82	83
8	87	84	57

5. Community E

Grade	%Puerto Ricans	%Blacks	%Anglos
1	60	33	8
2	72	54	25
3	70	60	13
4	60	50	27
5	48	39	27
6	60	43	19
7	64	65	55
8	60	33	37
9	52	37	19
10	46	49	20
11/12	55	46	30

6. Composite of the Reporting Communities (Grades 1-6)

Grade	%Puerto Ricans	%Blacks	%Anglos
1	62	38	7
2	68	47	20
3	75	53	36
4	60	53	41
5	73	73	34
6	80	51	48

That public education is failing the Puerto Rican child, that "the longer a Puerto Rican child attends public school the less he learns"(2), is, unfortunately, not news. That it continues unabated is catastrophic and criminal. That New Jersey public education is failing not only Puerto Rican and black youngsters, but seemingly also anglo-whites with their so-called built-in "advantage" of "home environment" is compelling cause for the New Jersey Supreme Court to move expeditiously and with full resolve in specifying both "process and product," the "content" of a 'thorough and efficient' system of public schools. The issue is not simply "the numbers of dollars invested," but rather what is done with - what should be done with - existing and/or projected educational resources and funding.

The issue confronting the court and New Jersey educators has been cogently outlined by Professor Frank Cordasco of Montclair State College: "Basically the Puerto Rican child is not a newcomer to the American school. In many ways he presents himself to a school and society whose very nature is heterogeneous and variegated

2. Richard L. Margolis, The Losers, (Research study commissioned by ASPIRA of New York); see also: J. Cayce Morrison, The Puerto Rican Study; New York: Board of Education, 1958; Frank Cordasco, "The Puerto Rican Child in the American School," Journal of Negro Education, 36 (September 1967); James Fennessey, An Exploratory Study of Non-English Speaking Homes and Academic Performance, Baltimore: Research and Development Center for the Study of Social Organization of Schools and the Learning Process, Johns Hopkins University, 1967.

and to which the non-English speaking child is no stranger. In this sense, the acquisition of English for the Puerto Rican child (if necessary and inevitable) is not a great problem; certainly, it is a soluble problem to which the American school brings a rich and successful experience... What is more important to the Puerto Rican child (and to American society) is the process of acculturation. How does the Puerto Rican child retain his identity? His language? His culture? In substance this remains the crucial problem, and in this crucial context, the role of the American society needs to be carefully assessed. If the Puerto Rican child is sinned against today, the tragedy lies in the continued assault against his identity, his language, and his culture wellsprings. In this sense, his experience is not fundamentally different from that of millions of other children to whom the American school was a mixed blessing. This is in no way a deprecation of the egalitarianism of the American 'common school,' but rather a reaffirmation of the loss of the great opportunity that a free society afforded its schools to nurture and treasure the rich and varied traditions of its charges. The 'melting pot' theory is at best an illusion measured against the realities of American society, and a true discernment of its strengths.

In another light, the Puerto Rican child is the creature of h social context. Its opportunities or lack of opportunities. If hi needs are to be met, they can only be effectively met insofar as the needs of this context are met. A school which is not communit oriented is a poor school, it is even more so for the urban school

which is the heir of the myriad complexities of a rapidly deteriorating central city. More important than the Puerto Rican child's lack of English, is the lack of that economic security and well-being that relates him to a viable family structure. If the Puerto Rican child's major disenchantment does not result from the segregated schools into which his poverty has placed him, still one would have to deplore the school's inability to cope with the alienation that segregation spawns, and the bitter destitution that poverty brings to its children."(3)

Earlier we raised the "striking contradiction" of the millions of dollars spent in encouraging students to learn "foreign languages' while nary a penny of locally raised educational funding (excluding federal Title VII monies) goes to the maintainence and enhancement of the native language competence of Spanish-speaking youngsters. The reporting districts indicated a mean percentage of 2.95% of the "locally raised operating budget" goes for "foreign language development."

At the same time the reported mean percentage of "locally raised" monies that was earmarked for " special education" (emotionally disturbed, culturally deprived, mentally retarded, and biologically impaired children) was 7.05%. Due to the

3. Cordasco, op. cit.

inappropriate wording of this question in our questionnaire we are unable to make a valid determination as to what percentage of these youngsters are Puerto Rican.

Almost one (.91) percent of the locally raised monies goes for speech therapists and the necessary equipment to meet the needs of those students with audio-logical deficiencies.

These figures supplied by the reporting districts certainly supports the contention raised by a growing number of Puerto Rican parents: "If my child was blind his handicap would be less of a problem in his schooling than is his inability to comprehend English." Somehow we have lost sight of the purpose for the "language of instruction" -- instruction. That "English" has come to be perceived by all the educators we researched as synonymous for the "educational development of Puerto Ricans" is unsound pedagogy to say the very least.

Cross-cultural studies have documented that children learning to read in their native language are able to master reading in the second language quicker than their peers who began in that language. Additionally, the former also develop better cognitive and concept building skills - basic tools for all further learning. Studies in bilingual Quebec show that children who have received a balanced education in two languages, and developed normal literacy in both languages are markedly superior to their peers in late adolescence on verbal and non-verbal tests of intelligence.

In Puerto Rico, studies conducted by Columbia University showed that the learning achievement of Puerto Rican children via Spanish was markedly superior to American children in the U.S. using their own mother tongue, English! If learning is truly the raison d'etre for public education, then New Jersey educators can no longer turn their

lac's to an irrefutable fact: Spanish is a phonetic language: it is easier to learn as a native language than is English. Bilingual education for non-English speaking students is "thorough and efficient education!" (3)

Of the reporting districts, seventy seven percent indicated that they operated a high school equivalency program and that the mean percentage for Puerto Rican participants was 29.8%. The same percentage, though not necessarily the same districts as above, reported having adult basic education programs. Including two districts which reported only one percent of Puerto Rican enrollee the mean percentage for Puerto Rican students was 32.8%. Excluding the nominal districts, Puerto Rican participation rose to a mean of 42%.

That there is such a high percentage of Puerto Ricans participating in high school equivalency and adult basic education programs is eloquent testimony to Puerto Rican perserverance for education and self-advancement inspite of significant obstacles. If anything, there should be a real and concerted effort to expand and extend these admittedly "limited" programs.

3A. Marilyn Samuels, Allan Reynolds and Wallace Lambert, "Communicational Efficiency of Children Schooled In a Foreign Language," Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 60, No. 5, October, 1969.

Hearings Before the Special Sub-Committee on Bilingual Education, May 18, 19, 26, 29, 31, 1967, U.S. Government Printing Office.

Any definition of "thorough and efficient" education must include bilingual/bicultural education for all of the previously stated reasons and such education must embrace adult programming.

To underscore Professor Cordasco's contention that "a school which is not community-oriented is a poor school," it must be said that schools as public institutions can no longer be merely located in a particular neighborhood, but rather must increase its stake and share significantly in the totality of the existing lifestyle. Viable neighborhood communities with close relationships among nearby families is one of the most positive characteristics of city life. Schools can and should play a key role in facilitating such relationships.

Neighborhood community schools should reflect and strengthen neighborhood cultural mores, the ties that bind the community together. They should assist the neighborhood residents to cope with the society at large.

Educators must not lose sight of the fact that it is people who give a school life. Since no one has a greater interest in the education of children than parents, parents should be encouraged to help and share in the creation of their school - a community energy center, home for a range of community-based social services and base for a variety of community-inspired self-directed programs.

Conclusion

The issue of acculturation vs assimilation strikes at the heart of what "thorough and efficient" education must entail.

"The assimilation vision of America has been something of an illusion - a generous and idealistic one, in one sense, since it held out the promise of a kind of psychological equality under the banner of an impartial symbol of America larger than the symbols of any constituent groups — but one which exhibited a considerable degree of sociological naiveté",(4) writes Professor Milton Gordon the esteemed scholar of American immigration history.

The New Jersey Supreme Court and the educators can ill afford to ignore his learned commentary: "The major efforts of immigrant - adjustment agencies should be directed toward acculturation... This places the emphasis on the provision of instrumental skills: adequate use of the English language not at the expense of (nor denigration of) but in addition to the native tongue, occupational training, orientation to standard technological devices, knowledge of how to make use of the vast array of American educational opportunities... The functional goal would be the successful relationship of the immigrant, both culturally and

4. Milton M. Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 129.

Table III-3

Gordon's Paradigm of Assimilation(5)

Group	Type of Assimilation						
	Cultural	Structural	Marital	Identificational	Attitude Receptional	Behavior Receptional	Civic
Blacks	Variation by class	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Ethnic Catholics	Substantially Yes	Partly (Variation by area)	Partly	No	Partly	Mostly	Partl
Jews	Substantially Yes	No	Substantially No	No	No	Partly	Mostl
Puerto Ricans	Mostly No	No	No	No	No	No	Partl

5. ibid p. 76
Explanation of types: "Cultural assimilation, change of cultural patterns to those of host society; structural assimilation, large-sale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of host societ on primary group level; marital assimilation, large scale intermarriage; identificational assimilation, development of sense of peoplehood based exclusively on host society; attitude receptional assimilation, absence of prejudice; behavior receptional assimilation, absence of discrimination; civic assimilation, absence of value and power conflict" (ibid, p. 71).

structurally, to the secondary groups and instrumental institutional areas of American life. Changing the direction or nature of his intimate, primary group communal life would be excluded as a feasible or desirable product of directed effort." (6)

The real issue confronting America, according to Gordon, is "structural pluralism... the major key to the understanding of the ethnic makeup of American society, while cultural pluralism is the minor one". (7) Thirty years ago Gunnar Myrdal documented in his magnum opus that "secondary group associations" (job and places of employment) are crucial for primary group interaction (structural assimilation). (8) In short, educators might more appropriately turn their expressed concern for "assimilation" to the arena of "behavioral receptional assimilation" which is precluding Puerto Rican socio-economic mobility.

To localize this problem, it is important to point out evidence is available which indicates that educational achievement is not directly transferable and related to the occupational

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6. ibid, p. 243

7. ibid, p. 159

8. Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, New York: 1944

opportunities available to Puerto Ricans in New Jersey (see Table II-4).

Education makes a difference in the occupational opportunities available to Puerto Ricans, that is quite clear, but only up to a point. For example, 6.0 percent of those with 5 years or less of education had been able to achieve either a white collar or skilled craft job, while 18.5 percent of those with 6 to 8 years of education and 19.1 percent of those with 9 to 13 years of educatio had achieved a similar occupational level. When you group togethe the category of white collar and skilled occupations with operatives, 23.9 percent of those with the lowest educational levels were so situated, while those with 6 to 8 years and those with 9 to 13 years of education were equally, 57.4 percent, situated. The level of education, or the lack of it, tells us more about the who are unemployed than it does about determining the occupations individuals are able to achieve.

Table II-4(9)

Occupation of Head of Household by Education of Head of Household

	Education		
Occupation	0-5 years	6-8 years	9-13 years
White collar, craftsmen	6.0	18.5	19.1
Operative	17.9	38.9	38.3
Laborer, service, farm	41.8	33.3	38.3
Unemployed	34.3	9.3	4.3
Totals	100%	100%	100%
No. of Respondents	67	54	47

x^2 = 23.39574 DF=6 P<.001 lamda RC=0.029 gamma=(+).44742

9. SORA Report: Puerto Rican Community, Vineland, New Jersey, 1970, p. 70.

Table II-5(10)

Occupation of Employed Persons by Ethnicity (N.J.)

Occupation	%Puerto Ricans '60 - '70	%Blacks '70	%Whites '70
1. Prof., tech., & kindred workers	2.7 - 4.2	8.3	15.7
2. Managers, adm. except farm	2.1 - 2.3	2.2	9.4
3. Sales and Clerical	7.7 -13.2	13.3	28.9
4. Craftsmen	9.2 -11.3	9.3	14.2
5. Operatives, Laborers	62.1 -55.2	38.9	20.6
6. Service Workers	10.1 -11.1	22.1	9.5
7. Farmers and Agricultural Workers	5.7 - 1.7	.9	.6*
or socio-economically:			
Middle Class: (#1 & 2)	4.8 - 6.5	10.5	26.7*
Strivers: (#3 & 4)	15.9 -24.5	27.6	43.1
Working Poor: (#5,6, & 7)	77.9 -68.0	61.9	30.1

* the .6% in category #7 for whites is included among the middle class as they are overwhelming farmers whereas for Puerto Ricans and Blacks they are overwhelming agricultural workers. It must be pointed out that category #7 does not include migrant farmworkers, day haul farmworkers who reside outside of New Jersey, and Puerto Rican contract workers.

10. U.S. Bureau of the Census
PC (1) - C 32 New Jersey ('72)
PC (2) - 1 D ('63)

If bilingual education is to have a demonstrable impact (measurement and evaluation of both "process" and "product") on non-English speaking students in New Jersey, it is important to point out what bilingual education is.

In a nutshell, bilingual education is using the child's native tongue as the medium of instruction until such time as the child is able to master the language of the dominant culture.

1. Bilingual education is an issue of language and learning;

2. Bilingual education is a total curriculum for conceptual and instrumental development;

3. Bilingual education is reflective of the needs of the non-English speaking students throughout the educational process (early childhood, elementary, secondary, special, vocational, continuing and adult education and as a concept embraces also guidance counseling);

4. Bilingual education is a process geared to individual needs and capabilities;

5. Bilingual education as an educational concept should not be limited solely to non-English speaking children;

6. While English as a Second Language (ESL) is a component of bilingual education, it must be noted that bilingual education as a pedagogical approach makes a clear distinction between education and language (e.g. between the content of education and the vehicle by which it is acquired);

This is not to say that bilingual education is the ultimate answer for the Spanish-speaking and other non-English speaking students in New Jersey. Furthermore, it must be stated categorically that bilingual education, in the final analysis, can in no way be viewed as "thorough and efficient" education. Bilingual education is equal education, however Hispanic education parity with all the other youngsters is in reality a woefully short-sighted prescription for progress. Equality, in this instance, appears to be a "Potemkin Village." Ultimately, the results from the New Jersey Department of Education's state-wide testing will determine the gaps bilingual education can reasonably be expected to close for non-English speaking students. What is yet to be determined will be the mutuality of benefits English-speaking youngsters will receive by being involved in such curriculum and programming. It may very well be the case that bilingual education in the short run will have more impact on those participating English dominant students than even the Spanish-speaking youngsters.

We are hoping that educators throughout this state will reflect on these findings and utilize the open-ended recommendations as benchmarks in the evolutionary process of defining and implementing "thorough and efficient" education.

Recommendations:

1) Clearly defined state and local educational policy in the area of bilingual education;

2) Clearly defined parameters for all programs of bilingual education, including teacher training, expecially designed curricula and teaching aids relevant to each language group, and the development of bilingual tests.

3) Funding to be in proportion to existing individual needs (non-English speaking students) and total volunteer participants (including English dominant youngsters;

4) Seek the advice of private and public institutions like the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey, ASPIRA of New Jersey, Puerto Rican Studies Department of Livingston College, and others for research activities, curriculum development, materials and tests for bilingual projects and contracts for project evaluation;

5) Institute state and local bilingual policy and monitoring structures;

6) Testing and measuring instruments to be developed and implemented which are valid for non-English speaking students;

7) Consignment of non-English speaking students to educational tracts to be postponed until #6 is implemented;

8) Child study teams be immediately upgraded with the capability for valid assessment and appropriate placement;

9) Expansion and extension of high school equivalency and adult basic education programs;

10) Schools as community energy centers;

To New Jersey's teachers, principals, superintendents, board members, and state officials we can only add that we are prepared to work hard and diligently with you to the ultimate of our resources to insure that together we can realize and operationalize a "thorough and efficient" education for all New Jerseyans

A D D E N D U M

In keeping with the spirit of our continuing cooperation with all education officials, it is incumbent for the Puerto Rican Congress to share in summary form responses to the New Jersey Department of Education's six hundred and fifty nine (659) questions "Towards a Definition of 'Thorough and Efficient'".

I General questions relating to the method of developing a "thorough and efficient" definition. — Questions 1 to 12

"Thorough and efficient" is both the equality of input and equality of educational achievement. Conceptually "thorough and efficient" must be viewed in evolutionary and not in static terms. What is important is not to stand the educational system on its head for merely the sake of change but rather to open up and broaden the base of policy and decision-making.

Equal educational opportunities must reach each and every child for only by so doing will schools, districts and regions be equalized. At the same time we must not forget those youngsters and adults who have dropped out of the educational system in spite of the constitutional mandate for "thorough and efficient" educatio

II Planning — Questions 13 to 61

A broadened base for planning procedures must be developed and implemented at both the regional and state levels. It is hoped that such a procedure would be both flexible and structured

to insure broad community participation for appropriate priority development, which would include evaluation, assessment, research and instructional planning activities.

The relationship between regional and state planning taskforces could be coordinated via a statewide testing program correlated with the program budgeting system.

III Assessment — Questions 62 to 103

Just as "thorough and efficient" mandates valid testing and measuring procedures for student placements, assessment procedures likewise must be developed and implemented to monitor and evaluate programming which is to be geared to the specific needs of, for example, the non-English speaking youngsters and adult education.

A total assessment program would appropriately include a regional assessment of local boards of education, only if there was a mix of both regional and state input into this structure.

Additionally, the assessment procedure would include teachers, parents, and other interested individuals in insuring that educational programming (the "process") realizes goal attainment (the "product").

IV Educational Program: general — Questions 104 to 155

The scope of the educational program should be determined by existing pupil needs. This is to say that "thorough and efficient" is more than just equality of education programming but that such programming must also concomitantly overcome the existing gaps

of educational achievement. The lasting consequences of the present disparities of advantage or asymmetrical educational development will surely be the larger task, even more so than the carrying forth of "thorough and efficient" education in say five years hence.

The magnitude of existing needs is such that the responsibility of state educational officials and their development and evaluative taskforces would seem to be crucial to such an undertaking.

As the role of the State Department of Education should be the root and branch for "thorough and efficient" education, its existing structure and delivery system of services mandates re-thinking. A re-organization of the state department's division of labor and table of organization along the lines of newly constituted regional districts should be developed and operationalized.

The infusion of master teachers, parents, and educational administrators at the state level from regional districts and private agencies would appear to be both desirable and appropriate. A bureaucracy too far removed from the nitty gritty of the classroom and community is, indeed, a prescription for the status quo.

V. Education Program: Vocational Education Questions 156 to 25

Too often vocational education is, in the final analysis, state financing and training for industrial manpower needs. While a well trained labor force is necessary for the enhancement of the state's industrial base, it is time for vocational education to also provide capabilities for economic cooperatives as a measure

for broadening the existing avenues of socio-economic mobility.

VI Educational Program: Special Education Questions 258 to 29?

The county child study teams are ineffective, out of tune with the operational needs of special education teachers, and are more of a contributing force than they are a factor in solving the individual problems of these youngsters.

Special education is the stepchild of each and every district. A statewide thrust implemented by master teachers of special education (practitioners not theoreticians) is very much in order.

VII Educational Program: Compensatory Education Questions 298 to 31'

We are in strong agreement with the New Jersey Education Association (N.J.E.A.) that "compensatory education is something we should guarantee to each individual child." Furthermore, as N.J.E.A. notes: "It is not however, a separate system of education,... but an essential part of thorough and efficient education.

To the question of bilingual education, N.J.E.A. states: "Bilingual and non-standard English education should be mandated for any individual child for whom the need is determined regardless of what school district he or she lives in. Bilingual education should also be made available for any children who desire it regardless of the language background of the families" (response made available by New Jersey Department of Education).

To the extent that adult education is compensatory education we would also include bilingual programming.

A regional director for compensatory education programs would insure that such programming is sharply focused regionally in both development and assessment levels to insure constitutional mandate is upheld.

VIII Organization Questions 320 to 402

It's the feeling of the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey that a "thorough and efficient" education requires reorganization of our educational delivery system. As a first step, in this process of reorganization, we propose that the state supercede local boards of educations and establish new school districts with boards that have a regional outlook. These new districts should be constituted with the aim of meeting the following criteria:

1. They should have ethnic and racial balance.
2. They should have a similar population density.
3. They should be geographically compatible.
4. They should have an optimum and similar financial capacity

although were student needs assessment so determine, additional funds should be provided for compensatory education programs.

All of the regional districts would be mandated to be organized on kindergarten to twelfth grade basis. The districts would also be required to offer early childhood (3 years) and adult

education on an optional basis for those residents who request it.

The Puerto Rican Congress also feels that the size of a school and the pupil/teacher ratio have an effect on a thorough and efficient system of education. Thus, we recommend that maximum school sizes and pupil/teacher ratios be established based on an objective assessment of student needs.

The Board of Education for the new regional school districts can be selected either by election or appointment or a combination of both methods, our only concern is that such boards reflect the total community within the district boundaries. We also recognize that laymen are, and will continue to be, the persons who are mostly responsible for policy-making (as members of boards of education) in education. To aid them in discharging that function, the state should provide them with the training on a periodic basis.

The question of tenure must be answered in the affirmative to attract and retain quality personnel, we must provide them with job security, adequate salaries and fringe benefits, and opportuniti to participate to the fullest extent in the process of policy designing.

We cannot endorse the concept of the year round school. It's the state responsibility to provide adequate facilities in order for the education provided to our school children to 'thorough and efficient'. The year round school concept is a way of getting around this responsibility. We realize that the State's taxpayers

are already heavily burdened and that the cost of new facilities may threaten to increase this burden. We strongly urge that priorities as to allocations of existing revenues be reviewed and revised where possible in order to make the required new facilities available without the need for additional taxation. We must bear in mind that the schools exist for our childrens benefits and not vice-versa. Overcrowded and overused facilities are not conducive to a thorough and efficient education.

We cannot endorse either, the institution of a voucher system. While such a system at first glance appears to offer freedom of choice, on closer examination we realize that people seek this so-called freedom of choice because our system as presently constituted is not providing our children with a thorough and efficient education. That is to say, if and when our educational system provides our students with comprehensive educational opportunities, the question of vouchers will become a moot one.

III. Staff Education Questions 410 to 491

While we have previously stated our support of tenure for professional staff in our schools, we feel that teachers should be evaluated periodically (5 years) for competency. Teaching laboratories should be established through the state and at the districts expense teachers should attend these for upgrading of their skills. These laboratories should not be seen as eliminating "in service" training sessions, seminars, and lectures that are presently offred by the districts.

The Congress feels that existing certification procedures are by and large adequate, with the addition of the periodic (5 years) evaluation proviso. That is to say, recertification should be issue at the end of the five-year period. In order to avoid abuses, we insist that before any decision is made to deny recertification, a teacher be granted the opportunity of attending a teaching laborator and that his/her recertification be ultimately decided by a committe that includes his peers.

We also feel that requirements should be established for the granting of certification in the area of bilingual education. A task force should be established to define the requirements in this area. This task force should include community persons, professiona with competence in Bilingual Education, teachers and administrators.

The Puerto Rican Congress is of the opinion that the quality o the school staff - both instructional and non-instructional - does have a determinate effect on a "thorough and efficient education."

X. Facilities Questions 492 to 57

The Puerto Rican Congress feels that it is necessary to have minimum mandatory requirements for educational physical facilities. The quality of the facilities is an aspect of thorough and efficient education.

The state should inspect all school buildings, public and private, and these facilities should be rehabilitated or replaced in order to conform to minimum mandatory requirements.

The minimum mandatory requirements should include:

1. Uniform building and safety codes for all schools in the state.

2. That schools be designed with structural flexibility in order to accomodate changes in the educational program.

In addition to these two criteria, the following must also be taken into account:

1. Facilities must be designed to provide for early childhoc and adult education.

2. School buildings should be multi-functional, that is the school building should reflect the concept of the school as a community "energy center."

We also feel that the content of school facilities (furniture, etc. should be subject to the same minimal standards for safety, flexibility of use, and aesthetic appearance as school buildings.

XI. Budgeting — Questions 571 to 62

The state should encourage community participation in plannin and budgeting. However, since under our proposed regional school district concept, the state is ultimately responsible for providing the school's finances, the state school board should have the final word on budgeting matters.

What we would like to see is a system whereas the state allocates the optimum amount per student in a lump sum to the regional school districts, plus the sums necessary for compensatory

programs, and the regional board determining specific expenditures from these lump funds.

Regional school districts should not have to raise funds locally; any such efforts should be determined at a statewide level

Although we have previously stated that school financing shoul be similar for the different regional school districts, in no case should financing of a district by the state be less than what that district or its component parts were spending previously per pupil under locally-raised revenues. Thus, it is obvious that an optimum and similar financing means that all districts under our recommendations will receive at least what the highest spending district is spending per pupil presently.

Adequate school financing is an essential aspect of "thorough and efficient education."

XII. Evaluation Questions 627 to 659

It is impossible to define thorough and efficient unless there is, implicit that definition, a motion of ongoing qualitative improvement. That is to say, the concept of thorough and efficient requires the evaluation of progress.

The qualitative measurement of progress should include the setting of standards for students' achievements, and ongoing assessmer of our methods for achieving thorough and efficient education as well as periodic reassessment of the goals of our educational system.

All public schools should be required to develop a program of self evaluation and the same should be required of the proposed regional school districts. School and districts should report on their efforts to remedy deficiencies identified by the evaluation process.

A program should be instituted to follow up on our students beyond the 12th grade, after all in the final analysis a thorough and efficient education should have as its purpose the preparation of individuals capable of functioning optimally in society.